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My dear Father Rome. Decembr 5th 1822

This is my birth-day yet I have certainly forgotten my age — but I have not forgotten that I am your Son — and that to your warm heart — your talents and industry I owe nearly all I hope — that my present enviable situation of happiness and fame — first began to dawn and grew out of the example the teaching or encouragement but most the anxious love of my dear Father for me all my early sufferings of unsuccessful studies — poverty — illness and struggles for Fame I found your heart and Home ever open to cherish me — when I seem'd shut out from the comforts of the world — it has been a Balm to me like success — a Balm — without which I might "have sunk into the grave unpitied and unknown" — But I shall get into tears with these things — which is not my intention as this letter will about reach you by merry Christmas — I intend — to sit down to dinner with you — and to enjoy myself by proxy through its means —

I can hear you ordering the Christmas up in the Windows "and put some in each side Fire Picture" and then the Logs or "Blanks" & every corner full of Coals — letting the approaching comfort — I can see your thinking look as you sit in your Arm chair to provide every thing to make a happy Christmas — shaking of it little — but always thinking until the time approaches — so that the day is come with its joys compleat —

My tender Mother who has been long expectating what will please the many palates — the fine Sir Loin — roasted to the turn — and to my Father who says — "Well after all there's nothing like a piece of Beef" — "a thin Jem" no it is like a dinner in Lent" — then a Goose or a Turkey to the taste and goodness of the Lady Sarah — then some Cabbage or Tom exclaims — "What is there so Cabbage?" and Sister makes an echo — "so Cabbage" — But the Plum pudding — "Ah

my poor Joe— Ah" — for I know that I am never forgot— I warrant now how my Mother is thinking over all the years of my Life— how well she knows my age— and if there is still any thing she can do to make me more happy— and of the time when I shall return and resume the Plum pudding Rig— happy— happy hours— when I shall return and find my tender Mother— in health and strength

My loving sister Sarah, how she comes trotting by the window— ever anxious for the good and comfort of us all— how many recollections of gratitude come over my mind when I think of her— and her gentle and ~~ever silent tongue~~— and ~~very slow~~ deportment— "how goes the Funds now— and are there any Canons in Bonds or Lands." — but all these endearments were with a good and not a spiteful motive— may Heaven bless them with success

My kind hearted Charlotte and Giles I have never written to— but always thought of— and enquired about— it was not from "Manners"— but I wrote to those who could or were in the way of writing back to me— "too many Cooks spoil the broth"— So they are tripping down to Brighton— this is delightful— I long to make the visit to Boston— which I was to have when I came away— when I was buried without seeing my dear Charlotte— but however they wish to see me some Morning down there— ~~with~~ My Affectionate Maria— without the Tooth Ache or we least ache— ~~how many good things~~ why what a pleasure you have given to my ~~Boys~~ Christmas in Rome by these grab-sprig and delightful things— why I have not recovered my surprise— never could any thing be more to my heart's content— for my dear Maria the betrothed young Friend— whose talents worth & Friendship I have ever found— prattle warm & sincere— is what I will both in view as a point of my future happiness— for my hopes and

years are so woven with your life— ~~[illegible]~~ Best wishes Thing to you
I pet is mine May the God above look down and still direct you
He has many good things in store for so much virtue and goodness
My jolly Brother Tom— how are you my boy— I mean I should
say— with your 21 Years over your head— why how I long to see you
and hear your Music— what a glorious treat that will be
when I return— it makes my heart beat ~~12~~ 6 when I think of it—
My good boy Charles— why, or you have topt me 5 Inches
— why do you think I will stand this— and you are topping me
in ability too like You— but this I like— it will be my
dearest pride when I return— to find my dear Brothers— excelling
me in all things but the likeness to my Father— there I have
you— for I am nearer his height than either of you— but you
in ~~[illegible]~~ and in our future life, we shall mutually assist
each other in fame and fortune— by any honorable ——
My dear Self I had nearly forgot Tom— and that this was
to be the news from me— Well you must know my dear Father that
here I am— attending to my usual and delightful Studies in the same
place— I came from Naples the 1st Nov.r and have been waiting for
Letters ever since— They had deputed me to conduct some business of our
Academy— The English Ambassador of Naples gave us 100 £— and I had to write
to Sir T. Lawrence— Be about so that my writing time has been taken up—
I hope to have 3 Pictures for the Exhibition in London next year— The
"Greek Shepherds rescuing a Lamb from an Eagle"— "Falstaff passing by
the Counters Gate"— and a whole length of Keats— the difficulty is in reading
writing— they will soon be ready— Falstaff is done— I have lately taken
a friend to live with me in my Rooms— he is the Joseph Gott— who had
the Gold Medal in Sculpture— with me— Sir T. Lawrence has given him a
Pension to the same as mine— he is married and has 2 children— I find

this change very pleasant for Mr Scott prepares all the Meals in the house
admirable eat together — there like being at home to me — we have an
english pudding every day — this young Man has very wonderful talent
Master I have done these things — I finish my Alexander before the
spring & then I intend my friend Mr Barrow in Florence also to contribute
to Lord Byron — I purpose visiting Venice next Summer — & that

[Postmark: BOSTON DEC 27 1822]

[Addressed:] Miss James Severn
to Madame Louis Sherriffe
Madeira
Inglaterra

you see I am passing such a quiet life that I have scarce any news to tell you
— my Work to have covered 2 Large Rooms — I have many visitors — We
have just received a most magnificent portrait of George 4th — by Lawrence
which astonishes every one — Pray remember me to all my friends — tell
Holmes I have nearly written a letter to him — I want my poor
Old Harpsichord — pray do with it whatever seems to you best — either
tune it — or break it up — I have a great partiality for it still —